

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: MPOL, NATO, TU
SUBJECT: ALLIED VIEWS ON U.S. FY 79 DEFENSE BUDGET

REF: STATE 34523, DTG 091759Z FEB 78 (NOTAL)

1. U.S. FY 79 DEFENSE BUDGET HAS PRODUCED NO SIGNIFICANT REACTION HERE, ALTHOUGH SOME NEWSPAPERS CARRIED FACTUAL ACCOUNTS AT TIME IT WAS SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS JANUARY 23. GENERALLY, TURKS ARE SENSITIVE TO DISCUSSIONS OF DEFENSE BUDGET ORDER OF MAGNITUDES, IMPACT OF DEFENSE SPENDING ON THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY, AND COMPARISONS OF DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WITHIN NATO. FOR EXAMPLE, TURKS ARE PROUD OF FACT THAT, ACCORDING TO NATO STATISTICS, GOT DEFENSE EXPENDITURES IN 1977 AMOUNTED TO 5.8 PERCENT OF TURKEY'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP), WHEREAS U.S. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WERE CALCULATED AT 5.5 PERCENT OF GDP. HOWEVER, TURKISH DEFENSE EXPENDITURES ON PER CAPITA BASIS WERE SECOND TO LAST OF NATO NATIONS, WHILE U.S. TOPPED LIST (ANNEX 25 TO DPC/D(77)32).

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2. POPULAR VIEW HERE -- WHICH IS SHARED BY MANY IN GOT-- IS THAT THE COST OF MAINTAINING TURKEY'S ARMED FORCES FOR "NATO PURPOSES" CONSTITUTES A HEAVY, IF NOT "UNACCEPTABLE", BURDEN FOR THE COUNTRY TO BEAR. SOME THEMES BASED ON THIS THESIS ARE THAT TURKEY SHOULD OBTAIN "FAIRER RETURN" ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO

ALLIANCE DEFENSE IN THE FORM OF ECONOMIC AND OTHER
ASSISTANCE FROM THE ALLIES; THAT COMPARISONS SHOULD
NOT BE MADE BETWEEN THE INABILITY OF TURKEY--
VIRTUALLY THE POOREST OF THE NATO ALLIES-- TO AFFORD
A FULLY MODERN AND WELL-EQUIPPED DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT
AND THE VAST EXPENDITURES OF THE DEVELOPED NATO
NATIONS; AND THAT THE NATO ALLIES -- AND
PARTICULARLY THE U.S. THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF
CONGRESSIONALLY-MANDATED ARMS TRANSFER RESTRICTIONS
SINCE 1975-- HAVE FAILED IN THEIR OBLIGATION TO
ASSIST THE POOREST ALLIES IN MAINTAINING AN
ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF DEFENSE.
SPIERS

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